LYRICS OF LIFE.

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BY

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Βαθύζωνοι κόραι.
Χρυσοπέπλου ΜΝΑΜΟΣΥΝΑΣ.
PIND. *Isthm.* v. 74.

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I.

CHILDHOOD.

Βαθύζωναι κόραι
Χρυσοπέπλου ΜΝΑΜΟΣΥΝΑΣ.

PIND. *Isthm.* v. 74.

CHILDHOOD, LOVE, AND DEATH.

Ye who have wandered thro' the faery fields
  Of innocent childhood, till ye reach'd the land
  Where Love takes Youth by the unreluctant hand,
  And leads him to the rough paths that demand
  Keen eye, and wary heart, and firmer stand,
E'en for the lordly soul that never yields
  To passionate impulse: ye who learn to see
  In Death no terror, but a glorious way,
  Illumed by Eden-sunlights, and a ray
  From God-lit realms of never-ending day;—
I too have wandered o'er that checquered lea,
And somewhat seen, and suffered thoughtfully;
Retraverse, gentle hearts, the wondrous path with me!

WHAT CHILDHOOD WAS.

GIVE me back, oh give me something of the flowers
and the gold,
And the depths of crimson glory that the summer
eves unfold,
And the tones of merry music from the rippling
waters rolled;
Give me back the vanished moments with their
wealth of joy untold,
And the childhood, and the gladness, and the glory,
and the gold,
Give them back, ere my *heart* too is cold!

Give me back the rosy blossom and the glances
bright and bold,
And if night or twilight cometh as our lives on
earth grow old,
Let the gloom be starry-sprinkled with a lustre
manifold:
Ere the sunny garden alter to a dank and ragged
wold,
Ere the mildew blight the corn-ear, ere the fruit be
white with mould;
Give, oh give, if for one moment, give the flowers
and the gold,
Memories of our childhood's May-time, magical
with flowers and gold,
Give them back ere our *hearts* too are cold!

THE HAPPY YEAR.

FAIR were thy four bright children, happy year!
The purple summer, and the golden wane,
Spring, garland-crowned, and winter, silvery-carred.

Spring, a gay child, with many-sprinkled plumes,
And cheeks of roseate apple, like a Love's;
Fanned with soft winnowing of gem-like wings,
Circled with flowers, and flower-like butterflies.

And Summer, flushing with his bloomy fruits,
A bold boy, bathing in the mountain streams,
Or, in the splendorous drowsiness of noon,
Sunburnt, a-slumber in the yellowing corn.

And Autumn, sighing in the silent woods,
Amid the fluttering patter of sere leaves;
Pale maiden, with a ruddy-golden wreath,
All gorgeous on her melancholy brow.

And crystal-sceptred Winter, glittering-eyed!
A monarch with his white robe diamond-fringed
And flowery-frosted; silver was his helm,
And the winds freshened on his sparkling cheek.

Fair were thy four bright children, dying year!
I love them, and have loved them all along;
Have loved them in the shower and in the shine,
Thankful for all the gladness they have brought.

FROM THE GREEK OF ALCÆUS.

Μηδὲν ἄγαν ἄγαν με τέρπει.

No golden-waving harvests,
  No spreading fields for me,
Not all the wealth of Gyges
  Shall my possession be!
Sufficient for the needs of life
  Is all I wish to have,
And what is nought excessive,
  Excessively I crave!

FROM THE GREEK.

Ὤφελόν γ' ὦ τυφλέ Πλοῦτε, κ.τ.λ.

WOULD that thou, oh blear-eyed Plutus,
Not in island, nor in ocean,
Nor on continent wert dwelling,
But to darkest hell wert banished,
There abiding, for thou wreakest
  Many woes on men!

A PICTURE.

And every move,
Graceful as Hyacinth he glided on;
Graceful as Dryad dance on violet mead;
Graceful as Grecian fancy imagèd
The rose-crowned Erös, as he sails the clouds
Clasping the doves of Aphroditè's car,
Or on the silvery deer of Artemis
Alighteth jubilant, and all unfurls
His many-coloured wings, until the breeze
Has dried them from the dews of asphodel,
And blown away the downy stamen-gold
Of bright amaracus, that to them clung
In glittering rich dust, from the flower beds
Where last the boy had slept.

THOUGHTS ON THE PICTURE.

O INNOCENT and fair, I pray for thee
That the white garment of thy lustrous youth
May keep its beauty, and that angel bands
May watch around thee in celestial choir,
And by the majesty of crownèd brow,
And by the purity of stainless hand,
And by the gleam of virtue's diamond arms,
May drive far hence the lion-hosts of ill
That growl around thee: so thou mayest live
In goodness, and, as highest mountain-top
Is rosy-crested on its helm of snow
First in the morning, and reflecteth last
The orbèd splendours of the burning sun,—
So thou, thus faultless in thy vernal days,
May'st, until death, still mirror on thy soul
Hues of reflected heaven.

ON THE ROCKS.

He sate on the rent and rifted rock
  That towers in its grandeur free,
That hath bared its breast to the thunder's shock
  And the storm-wind's maddening glee,
Hath learnt at the levin's flash to mock
  And the foam of the baffled sea,
And shelters the nests of the sea-birds flock
  In the clefts of the blighted tree.

He marked the moon from a whitened cloud
  Look forth with a fitful glare,
And he laughed as the wind in its anger loud
  Dispayèd his golden hair:

Not his was a heart could soon be cowed
  Though his form be slight and fair,
And he fronts the spray with a presence proud,
  With his white breast wet and bare.

E'en so, when thou leavest each childish toy
  To plunge in the world's hot fight,
Let thy spirit be calm amid earth's annoy,
  And clad with a fearless might;
Thou wilt need that strength, my noble boy,
  On thy way to the realm of light!
Till then, live on in the innocent joy
  That crowneth thy boyhood bright,
And ne'er may its gold have a base alloy,
  Its blossom a cankering blight.

THE WONDERS OF THE SHORE.

Come, Edwin, let us take a stroll the glorious beach along,
And gaze upon the merry waves, and hear their summer song;
And we will gather shining shells, and seaweeds blue and green,
And jewel-pebbles, tinted o'er with sapphire-fretted sheen,
And sprigs of coral, such as erst have formed a chaplet fair,
Entwined with sea-buds rosy-red amid the mermaid's hair,

Which when the sparkling dance was o'er the sea-nymph flung away
Where by the clear cornelian grots the petted fishes play,
And bits of jet and shingle wet from out the glassy wave,
And nameless things that in the sun gleam forth with colours brave.

We will not converse much, my boy, but fancy wild and free
Shall flutter o'er the wine-dark wave of the purple-shadow'd sea;
And sometimes dip her ivory foot amid the dewy gold,
Along the ribbed and yellow sands in rippling laughter rolled;
Or with the sea-bird splash her wing amid the sunny blue,
Or with the bounding dolphin dart the ocean-forests through;

Or light upon the barque's tall mast, that on her distant way
Cleaves with the dash of her gallant prow the white and hissing spray.

Or we will sit upon the cliffs in silence sweet and deep,
Nor will we check the passion-tears if the beauty make us weep;
We will not heed the passers-by, or mark them what they say,
The world is ours, and shall be ours through all this summer day.
And we will feel the golden light, and feel the slumbrous heat,
And in the herbage flowery-bright embathe our quiet feet;
And a gush of melody shall spring from out the softened heart,
And we will learn deep lessons yet ere thou and I shall part;

Such lessons as the gleams, and blooms, and
crimson sunsets give
To those who, from their glory, learn with thankful
souls to live:
So e'en when all the air is cold, and all the earth
is dim,
Our hearts shall mount in a freshening fount, and
gush with a gladdening hymn.

MY RIVULET.

TENDERLY, tenderly, tenderly blowing,
Fluted at even the zephyr of May,
Silverly, silverly, silverly flowing,
Sang the glad stream on its lily-clad way:
Sweetly and swift through the flowery meanders,
Ripples of sunshine were flashing along,
Where the blue rivulet dewily wanders,
Cheering the meadows with laughter and song.

Ever, oh ever at even, oh ever
Pleasant the thoughts that my rapt heart inspire
Still as I stroll by the crystalline river,
Blushing and flusht with a tremulous fire;
Clear and serene thro' the days of my childhood
Floweth and shineth that fairy-like stream.
Long may it mirror its blossoming wildwood,
Long in the rose-lights of eve may it gleam!

THE LAUGHTER OF THE SEA.

Tibi rident æquora ponti.—CAT.

O I remember once
  In my childhood green and fair,
When mirth was in the meadows,
  And music on the air,
I was rated for a dunce
  Because in boyish glee
I forgot my work in gazing
  On the glory of the sea;
Whose gold and sapphire network
  More gorgeous seemed to me
Than jewels on the broidery
  Of kingly robes could be.

And I gazed, and I gazed,
  Till the master and his book
Were vanished and neglected
  In the rapture of the look;
And I gazed, and I gazed,
  Enchanted and amazed,
Till the many-twinkling laughter
  Of the ocean's fretted gleam
Was enwoven in the magic
  Of my million-colored dream.

And when the task was o'er,
  I bounded down the stair
With fifty boys or more,—
  And in the sunbright air,
And on the sunny shore,
  We flung aside our clothes then and there:
And we ran along the sands with the mirth of clapping hands
And the flow of laughter sweet, and the patter of light feet,
  With the ivory white of our young limbs bare,

Till our bodies in we threw, and we glittered as
we flew
With a motion quick and bright,
Like a beam of argent light,
In the clear of the glassy-dimpled blue;
And we swam, and we dived, and we floated with
a plash,
And every arm upraised like a branch of topaz
blazed,
Till the fancy was delirious, and brain and eye
were dazed
With the lightning of the swift and merry flash.

Ah me! the golden time!
But the dream hath passed away,
With the clear and bracing clime,
And the pure and happy day:
And the sea still laughs to the rosy shells ashore,
And the shore still shines in the lustre of the
wave,
But the innocence and beauty of the boyish days
are o'er,

And many of the beautiful lie quiet in the grave;—
And he who comes again
Wears a brow of toil and pain,
And wanders sad and silent by the melancholy main.

SCHOOL FRIENDS.

Deligere oportet quem velis diligere.—CAT.

A DEADLY friend, a honeyed foe,
  Aye! two such have I known,
Two; and they wrought my childhood woe
  That turned its flower to stone.

Well nigh I curse them now:—not *them*,
  The worms are long forgiven;—
And yet their vileness oft did hem
  My erring soul from heaven.

One lives with flushed conceited brow;
  One begs beyond the sea:—
Forgive, oh God! forgive them now,
  The wrongs they did to me!

THE PRIZE-DAY.

THE prize-day! gladdest, sunniest hours,
  That word recalls to mind,
And cherished gains, and triumphs proud,
  And glances bright and kind;
And partings full of smiles and tears,
  And faces seen no more,
As o'er the darkening waves I pass,
  Towards the farther shore.

The flowers are dead and scentless now,
  The flowers the boys had worn,
The rosebuds and the lilybells
  They culled in the rosy morn;

The faded hues and languid blooms
  Are dead or thrown away:—
Ah me! but few the flowers of life
  That bloom beyond a day!

They come in turns to say Good-bye;
  I smile,—but cannot tell
The grief that shakes my heavy soul
  To say that word Farewell:—
Farewell!—*your* hearts will soon forget,
  And I shall dry my tears;
But happy thoughts of you shall shine
  Thro' all my future years.

BATH KOL.[1]

CYRIL and Reginald and I, three boys,
Strolled to the hills one sunny summer morn,
Happy of heart as boys alone can be
In the long light of summer holidays,
When life and the rich world before them lie
Bright as the sunrise:—but the best by far
And merriest-hearted of our triad there
Was my young cousin Cyril,—a fair face
Ingenuous, and a glancing dark-bright eye,
And brown curls, clustering like the hyacinth
Down a rose-cheek; a very picture he,
The darling idol of his mother's soul,
The cherished jewel of the friends he loved.
  Cyril, my Cyril, what a life was thine,
A life of joyaunce, innocence, and love!
No soul could hate thee, Cyril: to thy feet
The basilisk of envy crept, and gazed,
Gazed unmalignant with his glance on thine;

Then fled to hide him in the dust again.
Thine eyes were as an amulet to charm
All hurtful fascination, and thy brow
Was a phylactery where angel hands
Wrote Purity's divinest hieroglyph;
And nought but what was beautiful and good
Could linger in thy presence. Happy boy!
Pearls that have drunk the sunbeam, gems that hide
The rainbow in their bosom, and reflect
A floating gleam of liquid violet
Within them, were less beautiful than thou,
Less precious-perfect in the eyes of men!

Ah me! the memory of that golden morn
Still glows within my heart. In sun and shade
We played and leapt and shouted out our songs,
Till those reverberating hills gave back
Reflected cadences; or deep we plunged
Into the sapphire of the mere, and swam
In the cool lisping waters; or we read—
Reclined beneath the willows—poet-songs,
Watching the silver grebes or water-hens

That paddled in the sedge-flowers, and just stirred
The white and yellow water-lily wreaths.

Then homeward down the ledges of a glen
We wandered, Reginald and I before,
And Cyril, with his light foot in the flowers,
Behind us;—till amid a playful pause
I said, (the memory of the foolish jest
Hath torture still,)—'Think, Cyril, if your foot
Slipped on this glenside slope, and *down* you went,
Right down, to the stream in the valley,—only
What a romantic epitaph we two
Would write you, Reggy here and I.' But he,
Laughing, 'No thank you, for the kind intent,'
Tripped on.... O heavens! a shrill, mad, sudden shriek,
And a dull sound. I turned, and saw the boy
Rolling and crashing deep into the glen
Unchecked!—No pause for thinking;—with a cry
Reckless of danger, down the steep I sprang
To reach him, catching, clutching at the twigs
Of the chance shrubs to stay me. A young tree
Had stopped his fall, and instant by his side,

With a wild burst of agony and love,
I stood;—but he was senseless. There we sat,
My brother Reginald and I,—our tears
Now dropping on his white brow, and now dry
With terror,—chafed his cold soft hand, and oft
Wiped from his flower-like face the crimson splash
In passionate and trembling grief. At last
He had recovered, stood upon his feet,
And, with a faint smile playing in his eyes,
He whispered, while he leaned upon my arm,—
I hear him still—'How strange, if after all,
Dear Louis, I should need your epitaph!'
'Ah! spare me, Cyril,' shudderingly I said;
But scarce with many a childish-gentle word,
(The heart of childhood beat within the boy,)
Smoothed he the pain that gathered on my brow.
Slowly we led him homewards,—and next day
He seemed in all his hope and mirth once more
Save for a touch of paleness on his cheek,
And some dim shadow in his boyish smile.

* * * *

A week was over. Reginald and I

Returned to school, but Cyril stayed behind
For a week longer, and before its close
The flashed electric message summoned us
To his bedside;—the bedside where the boy,
The loved, the noble boy, lay weak and calm,
Fading to death in beauty. As at eve
A purple poppy droopeth, petal-dimmed,
Stem-broken with the riches of its dew,
So Cyril drooped,—and with an angel smile
Half-hovering on his gentle parted lips,
So Cyril died. I dare not think of it
Nor write, for the tears blind me. Since that time
We have not often spoken of his name,
Nor ever have we mentioned the long day
We strolled with Cyril on the sunlit hills.

[1] בַּת קוֹל "the daughter of a voice" was a name sometimes given by the Jews to words unconsciously oracular, when the tongue seemed (to use an expression of Æschylus) to be "guided amid the chances of destiny," so as to give unwitting expression to events on the point of fulfilment. Such instances are probably familiar to most readers either from report or from personal experience. The main incident of the above poem is literally true.

TO ASTER GAZING UPWARDS.

Ἀστέρας εἰσαθρεῖς Ἀστήρ ἐμός.

GAZING on stars, my star? oh! would that *I* were
the welkin
Starry with infinite eyes gazing for ever on thee!

FROM PLATO.

ON ASTER'S DEATH.

PHOSPHORUS wert thou of old, fair star, in the land
of the living;
Now thou art Hesper bright,—bright in the land
of the leal.

SKOLION.

ὁ καρκίνος δ' ἔφα, κ. τ. λ.

SAID the crab to the snake, with a cordial shake of
the clapper-claw most kind,
'*Straight* should a comrade be, my friend, and not
of a crooked mind.'

MY FIVE FRIENDS.

As on the summer flowret's bell
  The silver dew descends,
So on my fainting spirit fell
  The sympathy of friends.

When o'er the past's blue distance glows
  The light that memory lends,
A sorrowing soul shall find repose
  In thinking of my friends.

And should I track with weary feet
  The world's remotest ends,
Right sure I am I ne'er shall meet
  Five nobler-hearted friends.

Ah! while my simple thanks I write,
  Deep grief with gladness blends;
May worthier love than mine requite
  The goodness of my friends!

VALEAT CUNESIO.

AGAIN, again my footsteps trace
  The storied mound, the terrace green,
By all the dear and favour'd place,
  Through all the lov'd and fabled scene.

Again, again the ringing air,
  The playground flow'ring o'er with boys,
The faces young and dear and fair,
  The unrestraint of summer joys.

Again, again the friends I knew
  Who bore my wayward changeful mood,
Alike in weal and sorrow true,
  The brave, the wise, the pure, the good.

And many will have come and gone
  Ere once again with you I stray,
And many a sun have set and shone,—
  O fare ye well for many a day.

Ye guardian seraphs bright and strong,
  O strong and bright in love and truth,
From sin and ruin, shame and wrong,
  Shield, shield ye safe that home of youth!

A DREAM IN THE GARDEN.

Ah me! the days of childhood,
The golden days of childhood,
The halcyon hours of childhood,
  How swiftly have they flown!
As fall the purple petals
  Of flowerets fully blown;
As flies the violet-gleaming
From proudly-blazoned windows,
The crimson-burning shadows
  On carved cathedral stone;
As floats the silvery cloudlet
  All radiant and alone,
Along the deep-blue sapphire

That binds the sungod's throne,—
E'en so the days of childhood,
The halcyon hours of childhood,
The golden years of childhood,
So swiftly have they flown!

But why doth this sweet echo
Thus ring within my mind,
And why with linkèd fancies,
As with a chain of roses,
Does fair enchanting Memory
My wandering spirit bind?
O wherefore am I hurried
To distance-azured islets
On Time's receding wave,
When passing years should bear me
Aye onward to the future,
Aye through the weary present
And onward to the grave?

'Tis thus:—within an arbour
Three summer days I read,

Where many a star-like blossom
Of pure and perfumed jasmine,
And many a veinèd leaflet
  Were fluttering overhead:
And still my thoughts were flowing
  To days that long have passed,
And all my dim heart glowing
  With joys too rich to last;
For oft the garden round me
  Had echoed to my tread,
And to my brother's footsteps
When, in our happy boyhood,
All arm-in-arm we wandered
  With one who now is dead!
Ah me! the dream angelical,
  How rapidly it fled!

Yes! many a gentle playmate
  Hath sported with us there,
Fair boys with sunny foreheads,
Fair girls of tender beauty,
With cheeks of dimpled roses

And shining silken hair;
And still those little playmates,
Those gentle little playmates,
With faces soft and fair,
Would flash a sparkling image,
And pass with low faint music
Before me, as though seraphim
Were sporting in the air.

Not soon the spell was broken;
Thro' all the long bright day
I sought the silent garden,
And sitting in the arbour,
With book unread before me,
I dreamt my time away;
And still those little footsteps,
The tiny little footsteps,
Awoke the pattering echoes
In merry careless play;
And I, a child among them,
The happiest child among them,

Was heedlessly enjoying
  My young Life's early May.

O silvery was the laughter,
  O sweet each ringing tone,
And when the magic faded,
And Fancy swiftly-soaring
Dropped half the pearly broidery
  From her enwoven zone;—
Then, as the breeze of even
Went sighing through the blossoms
  With low unquiet moan,—
I could not choose but utter
'Ah me! the days of childhood,
The golden days of childhood,
The halcyon hours of childhood,
  Ah! whither have they flown?'

LIFE.

Lo! where Life's crownèd goblet stands
  In infant years before us placed;—
  A lustrous chalice richly chaced
With work divine of heavenly hands.

With golden flowers the stem is graced
  And tinct with honey gleams the rim;
  Too soon, too soon the gold is dim,
The honey,—absinth to the taste!

A SCHOOL CHAPEL HYMN.

ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS.

FATHER, before Thy throne of light
  The guardian angels bend,
And ever in Thy presence bright
  Their psalms adoring blend;
And casting down each amaranth crown
  Beside the fiery sea,
With voice and lyre in happy choir,
  Hymn glory, Lord, to Thee.

And as the rainbow lustre falls
  Athwart their glowing wings,
While seraph unto seraph calls,
  And each Thy mercy sings;

So may we feel as low we kneel
  To pray Thee for Thy grace,
That Thou art here for all who fear
  The brightness of Thy face.

Here where the angels see us come
  To worship day by day,
Teach us to seek our heavenly home,
  And serve Thee e'en as they;
With them to raise our notes of praise,
  With them Thy love to own,
That boyhood's flower and manhood's power
  Be Thine and Thine alone!

TEMPTATION.

Sed revocare gradum!

And we embarked upon a glassy sea
Lit with the lingering sunset, on a path
That flashed in rippling laughter treacherously
Right towards the west; and so we three embarked
On the bright falsehood of that gleaming sea,
Nor cared at all, nor hoped at all, to reach
A bourne beyond the waters, or green isle
Gemming with emerald the dividuous blue;
But still with oar and sail we glided on
Unheeding, reckless onward, towards the gay
Clouds of the golden and purpureal west.

Nor did we sail in silence, for our hearts
Half failed us 'mid the light of ardent waves,
And that unseen departure o'er the blue
To lands of naught; so not in silence we,
But straining at the slow reluctant oars
With frantic laughter, and a mirth that died
To chill us with the melancholy plash
And sullen shudders of the wind that crept
Athwart the ocean; not in silence we,
But with a seeming merriment, as though
We marked not how the bloom of sunset failed
In the dim distance of the purple west.

We knew that it was perilous and wrong
To trespass o'er the waters,—long ago
Forbidden; and ourselves had often seen
Fair barques that ventured thither hurled ashore
On the rough ledges of the shattering rocks,
Through the tempestuous seethe of hissing foam,
Mid shrieks of horror . . . 'But the halcyon wing
Youth's halcyon wing, hath lulled the charmèd wave
To argent mirrors for her radiant plumes;

See!—shall the dotards bid us stand at home
Like cowards?—nay! but onwards, and the tide
Shall float us gently as a seabird's nest
Towards the pure roses that the Hours have flung
O'er the sun's golden chariot; we return
Ere the night falleth or the storms arise.'

At first it was not easy. Now and then
Seemed it as some kind Nereid with her hand
Had clung to the dipt oar, or Triton pushed
With his broad spaddle backwards on the keel.
At first:—but every time the oar-blades fell,
And at each flapping of the wind-filled sail,
And at each bound the painted pinnace made,
'T was easier; till the shores lay far behind,
And the dyed waters darklier gloomed around,
And the pale west loomed paler on before.

Suddenly ceased the oars; but still the boat
Moved onwards, and amid some shock of fear
One cried, with a low wail of moaning woe,
'It darkens, oh my brothers! and the night

Falls, and the storm arises, and the glow
Has faded from the waters and the west.
O turn we, turn we, ere the thunder-fiends
Swoop on us through the midnight;—turn!'—
and we
Remorseful, with a terror at our hearts,
And all the startled energies of dread,
Turned backwards to the happy lands we left.

Fair lay they in the distance, calm and fair,
Still kissed with radiance; and the happy airs
Played round them with a balminess of life,
And lingered o'er the flowers of their still homes,
And by the silver error of their streams,
And o'er their blossoming woods:—and oh! we
longed
To mingle, sea-soiled as our garments were,
To mingle with their children once again,
Beautiful, innocent, in robes of white,
As erst, before that guilty eventide
Had lured us o'er the blush of sunlit waves
Towards the gorgeous magic of the west.

But the wild winds had risen; murmuring low,
They played and patted on the lisping waves
At first;—but momently with louder scream,
And the rough buffet of their ringing wings
Swept o'er the billowy gulfs, and every length
Of the poor boat was won with labouring hands
And fainting spirits, till at last we ceased,
Despairing;—and the storm-winds hurled us back,
And vainly in the weary hours we tried
To win the homeward passage: for our arms
Grew feeble, and our hearts were chill with woe.

Where were the laughing, lisping, freshening waves
That with their playful fancies infantine
Had plashed and babbled on the sunlit sands?
Where was the primrose-colored evening, dyed
With faery phantasies of rose and gold,
The one star-jewel trembling on her brow?
Where was the balmy wind's Æolian tune
Of fluted minstrelsy? Was this the scene
That lured us; . . . wild and terror-haunted night,

Black sea, and blazing storm, and lightning-flare,
And fury of the thunder? . . . O my God!

So through the gathering darkness, o'er the sheets
Of white foam swirling round the riven path,
Beneath a livid wrack of ragged clouds,
We floundered onwards;—and one face was bowed
Down to the knees to hide the bursting tears
And choke the terrible sobs,—and one glared up
Defiant, haggard, through the furious night,—
And one was stricken down, with forlorn glance
Bent on the pitiless sea:—and on we drove,
Forwards and onwards, toward the pitchy gloom
That hung athwart the thunder-threatening west.

And horror fell upon our hearts!—But hark! . . .
A voice across the waters, and the gleam
Of white robes, and a foot upon the waves!

NECESSITY.

He wandered by the lonely sea
  And saw the mighty billows dash,
And edges of the purple wave
  With foamy silver flash;
He learnt to loathe his evil heart
  In wandering by the wondrous main,
And vowed to choose a nobler part;—
  Ah God! the vow was vain!

He paced for hours beneath the moon,
  Where from light clouds of silvery green
She poured her mystic lustre round,—
  A jewel-kirtled queen:

Infinite, infinite through the sky,
  Numberless stars their influence shed;
He scorned the past, and his hopes rose high;—
  Ah God! they soon were dead.

Beneath the forest trees he lay
  I' the sunlit fragrant air,
With the violet flowers in the moss at his feet,
  And the pure wind in his hair;
And the sky and the lake had a golden gleam,
  And the green earth blythely shone;
"And the lost, lost years will I soon redeem:"—
  A week—and the will was gone!

He kneeled in prayer in a lonely room,
  Raised hand and streaming eye,
With a swimming brain, and a burning heart,
  And a wild and bitter cry;
And a light came down on his stormy fears,
  For a time:—but the light grew dim,—
And now through the gloom of the pitiless years,
  What hope, what hope for him?

HORROR OVERCOME.

I HAD a dream, a hideous dream;
  Its horrid phantasms haunt me yet,
Its fiery figures round me gleam.
  The sun had set;—the sun had set,
But through the darkness fell a glare,
  No soft and silvery light afar,
But as in fens the witch-fires flare,
  Or red as meteors are;
So, sulphurous, the clouds among
Red and ghastly cressets swung,
And flickering, baleful, splendour flung
  Instead of moon or star.

And all the world was mad with guilt,
  And all around me surged a crowd;
A godless throng, and blood was spilt
  'Mid curses deep and loud;
And deeds were done at which the sun
  Had shuddered, and the sky was riven;
And every soul had sinned a sin
  That could not be forgiven!

And then amid the sweltering mirth
  I heard a dissonant echo ring,—
"Rejoice, rejoice! o'er all the earth
  The devil is king, the devil is king!"
"The devil is king!"—like burning flame
The words across my senses came,
  And from the cursed rout I fled,
Pursued by wrath, and fear, and shame,—
  They waved their torches o'er my head;—
  But, ere the vision smote me dead,
I breathed a prayer, a word of prayer,
  And something seemed to break the spell,
And, carried soft through fragrant air,

Far from that revelry of hell,
Odours I breathed of heavenly blooms,
Glimpses of light I caught which broke
From starry crowns and angel plumes,—
That with the sudden bliss I woke.
I woke, and tears were on my cheek,
And long with beating heart I lay;
But when I rose, resigned and meek,
I knelt me down to pray:—

"Father, to Thee we cry, we fly,
O save us, Father, by thy grace:
Beset with fears, oh, lead us home,
Where sin and sorrow never come,
And Horror has no place:—
We are the people of thy hand,
The loved sheep of thy pasture we;
Strong in thy strength, oh, bid us stand;
And with thy freedom free!"

HYGEIA.

HEALTH, happy Health! who would not rather
shout
Amid the green old hills a shepherd boy,
With nought but thee to kiss his cheek to rose,
And wind and sunbeam on his flaxen curls
To toy them into gold,—than reign a king
Crowned, purpled, sceptred, and with burning brow,
Fretted with wearying cares of sovereignty?

Health, happy Health! who would not rather stroll
By the wild streams that wanton through fair fields
With motion musical of silver waves,
Or through blythe moors in rude and ruddy
strength
Follow the game,—than o'er the lettered page

Bend, though it glow with eloquence and song,
Till the brain deadens, swimming heavily?

Health, happy Health! who would not rather stand
Upon the slippery and wave-struck deck,
A sailor lad, who never knew the touch
Of sickness, though the tumbling waves were mad,
And the winds howled above them,—than be tired
With all the languid luxuries of wealth,
And the dim lassitudes of idleness?

Health, happy Health! if in the elder days
My lot had fallen, I had vowed to thee
A milk-white bull, flower-wreathed and golden-horned,
Or reared a radiant statue in thy shrine,
Chryselephantine;—hear me, happy Health!
Hear me, fair Spirit, in the weary hours!
So, giftless, soon thy tenderest gentleness
The pallid cheek shall re-illume with rose,
And light a starrier gladness unbesought
'Neath the dim eyelids, heavy-lustreless.

CONISTON LAKE.

THE mountain's eager air we breathed;
We rowed along the silver lake,
And watched the vapours lightly wreathed,
And marked the little ripples break,
Or plunging in the liquid blue,
Beneath the noontide's golden glare,
From wave to crystal wave we flew
With glistening arm and streaming hair.

And oh, the joy of summer skies,
And woods, and hills, and waters bright,
To him whose fading brow and eyes
Are paled of bloom and dim of light;
He hears the wave of life remount
With gladdening impulse fresh and free,
And the long-sad and silent fount
Re-sings its olden melody.

HADRIAN'S VILLA, TIVOLI.

"Except the Lord build the house . . ."

WHERE the cypress upheaves its dark green leaves
By the side of the glistering pine,
Mark how the rose of the sunset glows,
And the snow-fringed mountains shine.

And round us rise to the wondering eyes
The wrecks of imperial pride,
As by the walls of the painted halls
We are wandering side by side.

Aye, the lightning hath shattered, the storm-wind scattered
The palace-piles they built;
And the dark years fall like a funeral pall
O'er the tale of their purple guilt.

And the golden domes of their gorgeous homes
  Are crushed to the crumbling soil:
For if God hath not given his blessing from heaven,
  But vain is the builders' toil.

THE LEGEND OF ABER.

At Aber, where Llewellyn's palace stood,
In turbulence of laughter down the vale
The torrent, murmurous with many a fall,
Danceth its mazy gladness, flowery-foamed,
And the proud mountains plumed with fir and fern
Stand purple in the sun. Llewellyn's hall
Rang with the revelries of harp, and song,
And wassail; and each bearded warrior's cup,
By fair-haired pages crowned with generous wine,
Stood ruby to the rim.
But she, alone,
The pearl, the rosebud of Llewellyn's court,

She whose sweet voice rang sweeter than the harp,
Whose eye shone softer than the evening star,
Had wandered unattended down the vale,
In heavy-hearted sorrow, beauty-clad,
Llewellyn's queen;—rich was her royal robe
With golden broidery, and round her brow
Rested a princedom's circlet, many-gemmed,
'Mid her long curls;—yet all alone she roamed
To where tumultuous down the rifted crags
Sprang the wild wilful cataract. There she sate,
In silence of her suffering loveliness,
Dipping her light foot in the dimpling wave,
Or with the jewelled fringes of her robe
Ruffling the rippled pool. But all her thoughts
Were dark for him who in those treacherous halls
Was feasted—"O, for but a whispered word
To warn him of his danger!" Brave De Rhoos,
Dark Gwyllym, flower of English chivalry,
Had won her warped affection, and she feared
That Prince Llewellyn, while he called him friend,
Would dog him to the death. "The gallant knight!
O for one word, one brief and whispered word,

To warn him!"—so she murmured, as she bent
Her long, bright tresses downward o'er the wave.

Was it the ripple tinkling silverly
Upon the fretted pebbles at her feet?
Its sound was as of laughter,—a dark eye,
Violet and glowing, met her timid glance,
And on an emerald moss-knoll, with his harp,
A minstrel stood before her; and he sang,
The while he gazed upon her, and his hand,
His light hand trifled with the thrilling strings:
"Tell me, princess of Llewellyn,
What wouldst give to see thy Gwyllym?"

And with a start the princess answered him:—
"Cymri, Lloegr, and Llewellyn,
Would I give to see my Gwyllym."
Loud laughed the scornful harper, and he turned
To a dark field, where, 'mid the ashen grove,
A gibbet o'er the feathery foliage gloomed;
And pointing,—"Lo thy Gwyllym!"—and her eye
Saw a dark form, that swung in knightly arms,

Upon the clanking chains. A wild, wild shriek
Rang through the echoing windings of the hills,
As fainting on the sward the Ladye fell;
And when her wandering senses had returned,
Deep twilight brooded o'er the pleasant vale
At Aber, where Llewellyn's palace stood.

THE SEA-NYMPH'S LOVE.

When first the wondrous Argo's flashing oars
Smote on the silvered blue, and when the wind
First played in laughter with her snowy sail,
And curved its heaving bosom, like a swan's ;—
Up-started here and there, amid the waves,
The Tritons, marvelling and jealous-eyed
Astride their flouncing dolphins, trumpeting
Strange murmurs from their wreathed and rosy horns.
And e'en Poseidon's hoary royalty
Reined his sea-steeds to gaze on that fair ship
That broke the glassy waters of his main

To foamy furrows; and the Nereids clung
Round Amphitrite's car, while their dark eyes
Looked wonder through their long blue tresses,
crowned
With clustering sea-bells. Fairest of them all,
And stateliest, leaning on her rosy arm,
Upon a radiate, many-coloured shell,
Lay silver-footed Thetis, beautiful
With pearls amid her hair.
But by the prow,
Alone (for it was noon, and all the rest
Were slumbering in the cool), a hero-form
Glimmered in golden arms; and the light wind
Lisped in the red plumes of his glancing helm,
And shook the feathery shadows on a brow
Calm, marble, like a prince's. There he stood
In silent grandeur gazing on the scene
That died away to silence in the noon;
A murmurous hush, save for the playful wave,
That, flickering in the sunlight and the wind,
Patted and flapped upon the vessel's side
With low, sweet sounds of laughter musical;

And the clouds slept i' the lustre of the blue
Of heaven, the deep blue mingling on the marge
With the blue slumber of the lighted sea.

The Tritons and the sea-nymphs passed; but she,
The silver-footed Thetis, saw the youth,
And gazed upon his beauty full of love:
Gazed from her floating shell amid the waves,
Floated and gazed in silence from the waves
On Peleus, and his arms, and glancing helm,
And on the lengthened shadows of his height,
Flung on the purpling waters, until eve,
And till the sunset, and the twilight. Then
Sank she to coral grottoes, jewel-lit,
Where, all night long, the soft-eyed god of sleep
Shook dewy slumbers from his poppy-wreath
O'er her; and, o'er her head, aerial-hued,
Waved many a dream, colouring the dark of sleep,
Mysterious,—whispering to her inmost heart
Fore-feelings of the destinies to come.

MY LITTLE ROOM.

Oh! what a living green is on the leaves,
A green that seems to brighten through the air
And tinge it with ten thousand emeralds!
How the tall linden lifts in the purple sky
The honeyed fragrance of its golden flowers
Heavy with dew-drops:—for six burning days
The sun with crimson majesty of heat
Had smitten the faint world, but yesternight
Came the mad merry thunder, and it leapt
With myriad echoes through the rolling clouds,
Dashing the raindrops from them: and I woke
To hear them pattering on the shaken panes,

And streaming down the casement; then I slept,
To see the lightning flash upon my sleep,
And hear the thunder throbbing through my dreams.
And now it is the morning, and the storm
Growls in the muttering distance, while the air
Quivers with coolest perfume, and the tones
Of birds that twitter in the chestnut-boughs.
I sit before my window, and inhale
The mingled beauty. From this window-seat
How often have I gazed upon the clouds,
And watched the rich purpureal pageantry
Of sunset painted in the pictured west!
My heart is glad and heavy when I think
Of all the wealthy hours that I have spent
In the dear precincts of my little room.

ERIC'S HYMN.

ALONE! alone! ah, weary soul!
  In all the world alone I stand,
With none to wed their hearts to mine,
  Or link in mine a loving hand.

Ah! tell me not that I have those
  Who own the ties of blood and name;
And pitying friends who love me well,
  And dear returns of friendship claim.

I have, I have! but none can heal,
  And none shall see my inward woe;
And the deep thoughts within me veiled,
  No other heart but mine shall know.

And yet amid my sins and shames
  The shield of God is o'er me thrown;
And 'neath its awful shade I feel
  Alone, but ah! not all alone!

Not all alone! and though my life
  Be dragged along the stained earth,
O God! I feel Thee near me still,
  And thank Thee for my birth!

A LESSON OF LIFE.

LORD and Father, great and holy,
  Fearing nought we come to Thee;
Fearing nought, though weak and lowly,
  For Thy love has made us free;
By the blue sky bending o'er us,
  By the green earth's flowery zone,
Teach us, Lord, the angel chorus:
  "Thou art Love, and Love alone."

Father, Lord of bright creation,
  Holy, blest, eternal Son,
Spirit, fount of inspiration,
  Glorious Godhead, Three in One,

With the notes that high-ascending
  Choir around the jasper throne,
May Thy sons the song be blending:
  "Thou art Love, and Love alone."

Though the worlds in flame should perish,
  Suns and stars in ruin fall,
Trust of Thee our hearts should cherish,
  Thou to us be all in all;
And though heavens Thy Name are praising,
  Seraphs hymn no sweeter tone
Than the strain our hearts are raising:
  "Thou art Love, and Love alone."

II.

POEMS OF LOVE.

Jam scio quid sit Amor! duris in cotibus illum . . . .

I.

ERÔS DUSERÔS;

OR,

LOVE'S SORROW.

CHANCE AND CHANGE.

UNDER our green hills lies a glittering lake,
A sheet of blue and silver, glassy-smooth
Save where before the white imperial curve
Of the swan's bosom, ruffled by her plumes
The rippling wavelet flickered into gold;
And, mirrored in the centre, rose and shone,
Like a rich emerald on a fair girl's neck,
A fairy islet in the silver lake.

Over those silver waters silently
We floated,—silent, for the sense of love
And beauty, like a perfume in the air,
Lay with a magic opiate on our souls,
And lulled us with divine mandragora;

Till Ronald, as he dipped the lazy oars,
And plashed the dewy diamonds in the air,
Ronald the fair-haired merry-hearted boy
'Gan thrill the slumbering echoes with a song:

Joy, joy, joy,
In the balmy summer air,
Joy, joy, joy,
For the world is bright and fair,
O joy, joy, joy,
Beneath the sunny blue,
When the loving soul is tender
And the beating heart is true!

Joy, joy, joy,
By the gemmy waves to pass,
In forests sheen and meadows green
And flowery-gleaming grass;
O joy, joy, joy,
Beneath the golden ray,
For leaden must the spirit be
That *could* be sad to-day;

Ay, leaden must the spirit be
That dares be dull to-day.

So sang he in his ringing treble tones
With exquisite falsetto now and then,
Young Ronald, the boy-poet whom I love,
Exuberant of heart; and, as he sang,
Into the shadows of the emerald isle
Glided the gilded prow, and by the prow
She sat, my noble Ethel, motionless;
And shaken by the west-wind from the leaves
The glowing sunlight tempered by the green
Fell softly o'er her in a golden rain,
O'er her fair face and o'er her floating curls
Which laughing May had circled with a crown,
A delicate coronal of blue and white,
Cinque-foils of starry white, and tenderest blue
Forget-me-nots, and lilies of the lake.

And she was mine, my Ethel, plighted mine;
And as I sat by Ronald and by May,
I gazed upon her till her dark eyes fell,

And the young rosebud on her lovely cheek
Brake to the sudden blossom of a rose,
And May and Ronald smiled :—but *could* I cease
From gazing on the fairest face of earth,
And dark eyes deeper than earth's violets,
And on the rose-lips that a thousand times
(O angel message from an angel-mouth !)
Had softly, sweetly whispered that she loved ?

Beautiful Memory ! blessedly dost thou
Retouch the fading picture of the past
And call the things that are not into life.
Ethel is mine no longer,—and the lips,
The rosy lips that murmured of her love,
For all their rosy sweetness, are forsworn.
And Ronald, Ronald of the merry song,
Meets me with shy looks in the common street,
Without a recognition ; and dear May—
For months I have not seen the laughing child,
'The cousin of the Rainbow,' nor again
Can ever hope to see her while I live.

THE SUDDEN CURSE.

O ASK me not!—I cannot sing
  Or touch with joyous hand the lyre,
Or bid its soft notes flash and ring
  With melody and fire;
O ask me not!—'t is all in vain:
  Can you not read upon my brow
The lines that tell how care and pain
  Have quenched the merry spirit now?

The light hath faded from the sky,
  The glory from the world hath gone,
'T was love that lent the purple dye,
  And in the sunlight shone;

And Love hath died: and cold and pale
  Is all around, above, below,
As when chill sleet and drizzling hail
  Fall on the blank and driven snow.

Yet deem not that I mean to sink
  With wearied heart and heavy eyes
As drooping by a fountain's brink
  A trodden violet lies.
Ah no! I wait and work the more:—
  Soon o'er the cold remorseless sea
Shall gleam from yonder hidden shore,
  The beacons of Eternity!

A CRY FOR PITY.

O EVERMORE I call to mind,
  As through the weary miles I fly,
How happy, love, my lot had been,
    Hadst thou been by!

And then in dreams I summon up
  Thine image here, and whisper low
Such thoughts as from a lover's heart
    In music flow.

But nought, alas! avails to dream
  My happy arm thy loving zone;
Awaking with a pang I feel
    The more alone!

And nought avails to fly afar;
  I cannot leave the past behind;
Its ever-lengthening darkness broods
    Upon the mind.

Is it that when my heart is wrung
  The bitter cry thou canst not hear,
And that no passionate sob can reach
    Thy marble ear?

O pitiless of soul! I loved,
  And thou hast flung my love away;—
O faithless! give me back once more
    The glory of the day.

SORROWFUL MEMORIES.

Come, darling, come! I know thee far away
In that fair village by the western sea,
Where, as you oft have said, melodiously
Ripples the clear wave on the yellow sands,
And myrtles blossom on the sunny greens
Silver and odorous :—come, darling, come!
Oft have you told me of that joyous place,—
(Have told me with your gentle hand in mine,
And eyes of deep and glowing violet
Fixt upon mine, but ah! not drunk as mine
With dancing love-light and the dew of tears,)—
Have told me till I see that pleasant home

Before me, with its flowery garden-walks
And smooth lawns where the rosy sundew glows,
And the moss glisters, and the honey bee
Murmurs of peace: my foot was never there,
And—wherefore?—but I dare not enter there,
And I shall never see it;—never see,
Perhaps, thine own fair forehead, darling, more,
Or hear the music of thy laughter more.

Come, darling, come! yes thou art far away
In that fair village by the western sea,
Asleep, asleep; and stars are in the sky,
And the white moonbeams flood the little room
With pale unearthly splendour, on whose beams
The angels floating from the blissful realms
Glide down within thy slumbers,—welcome thee
And bless thee with the beauty of their gaze,
And the pure lustre of their holiness.
But I, within the ruins of my love,
Sit restless on the dark and moaning wilds,
And the Dark moves and flashes here and there
'ith horror;—and I lie awake and think

Of thee, the only bright thing in my soul,
The one bright vision of a gloomy soul.

Darling, of thee; . . . and yet thou lov'st me not,
Nor ever loved me, cared for me at all,—
(And yet if I *could* think so I should die)—
And com'st not. Ah! but if thy love for me
Were deep as mine, it needs not that the wave
Should bear thee hither, or the iron road:
Nay! but the passion of my soul should reach
A hand athwart the midnight, and should touch
Thine eyes to tears of pity, waking thee
To draw thy young thoughts towards me in my woe,
Young pitying thoughts:—and thou shouldst still be here
Like sunlight shining on the fount of tears;—
Still here, though thou art resting far away;
Sleeping with moonlight in the little room
In that fair village by the western sea.

FARE THEE WELL.

FARE thee well, fare thee well!
Flowers of happy earth are springing,
Though the heart with anguish swell;
All the air with joy-notes ringing,
'Mid the sorrow-boding knell;
Fare thee well, fare thee well!

Fare thee well, fare thee well!
Brightly stands thy life before thee
Mantling o'er with œnomel,
Angel hands are showering o'er thee
Rosy bloom and lily-bell;
Fare thee well, fare thee well!

Fare thee well, fare thee well!
But for me Remorse remaineth
Like a Fury foul and fell,
And my life a sorrow staineth,
Changing heaven to burning hell.
Fare thee well, fare thee well!

Fare thee well!
But, if woe should e'er assail thee,
And a dread thou mayst not quell,
And thy falser lovers fail thee,——
Can thy heart the sequel tell?
Fare thee well!

A LOST LOVE.

ONCE more my steps are towards you, oh my love,
Though our friends know not that amid the hopes
That lead me hither thou art of the chief.
But 'tis the last look, Lilian, and fear not
I will betray the secret; when thy hand
Thrills me to rapture, as the musical wind
Wakes rapture in the harps of Æolus,
I will return the touch indifferently,
And only greet thee with a common phrase
Of coldness;—I am nothing unto you,
Though you are more than all the world to me.

A last look, and my love for evermore
Shall lie deep-buried in my inmost soul

In silence :—wherefore should my own sad life
Throw shadows on the loveliness of thine ?
For *thee* the long day passes in the glow
Of warm and sunny summer ;—and for me—
Enough !—for I am nothing unto you,
Though you are more than all the world to me !

Help me, oh God ! oh, help me to forget,
Forget, and sprinkle with Lethean dews
The faded purple of the hopes I had.
Why should I wail infructuous in the dank
Chill darkness ? Ah ! I will not, for the strength
Comes o'er me ! I will *live* once more, and cry
With the frank courage of a manlier heart,
Farewell ! for I am nothing unto you,
Though you are more than all the world to me !

THE LAST WORD.

To walk, to walk with thee, love,
  The path of life along;
To rest, to rest with thee, love,
  Its few fair flowers among;
To sleep the long, long slumber
  Of death, love, by thy side;—
This was my passionate dream of youth,
  This hope my manhood's pride.

Ah, well! the dream is scattered,
  The pride in dust laid low,
The glassy hope is shattered
  By one relentless blow:

Alone I sit, confounded
  By fears and vain regrets;
Scarce on the green grave of my joys
  Grow Memory's violets.

And now, love, what remaineth?
  What help or hope have I?
What aim save in the dreary earth
  To lay me down and die?
Tush! I have lovers yet, love,
  And friends to take my part,—
Wronged Faith, and Truth, and Conscience,
  God, and a dauntless heart.

III.

POEMS OF LOVE.

II.

THE HAPPY LOVE.

Σπεῖρε νῦν ἀγλαΐαν.

PIND. *Fr.*

THE MEETING.

SHE was as glorious as the morning star
When first she dawned upon me; her clear eyes
Were mysteries of love, and o'er her brow
Sported the light bright curls of golden hair,
Tendrils of sunbeam trembling o'er its snow
In little glittering flashes; and her bloom
Was as a summer alabaster cloud
Transfused with roseate glory, or as leaf
Of rosebud fallen on the lily's bell.

I met her in the slumbrous hush of noon,
When all was silent, save the dreamy sound
Of wandering murmurs in the fragrant air,
And laughter in the music of the wave;

The blue sky, bending o'er the beauteous world,
Glowed like the sapphire pavement angel-trod;
And the broad heaven from meres of chrysolite
Poured river after river of bright gold.
It was the balmy spring-time, and to me,
In the rich beauty of her queenly youth,
Bathed in the vernal airs of joyous life,
She seemed the fair young goddess of the scene.

Alone I met her by the crystal rim
Of a sweet lisping runnel near the sea,
Where Spring had sprinkled on the vivid green
Of mossy verdure many a golden star
Of primrose,—and a thousand flowers besides
Gushed into crimson streams, or through the grass
Meandered in a broidery of blue.
And she was holding in her lily hand
A tiny garland of the gathered buds,
And one she dropped in passing: with quick hand
I seized and held it towards her, but with grasp
So strong, and such a long and longing look,
That, with a smile, she bade me keep the bud;

And, passionately kissing its pure leaves,
I placed it in my bosom. But that smile!
The gleam of liquid laughter in the eyes
Blue as the violet, and the parted lips—
Parted with pearl! Ah heavens! within my heart
It lives with haunting beauty; it will glow
Deep in my inmost spirit till I fade
E'en as the flower she gave me; it will glow
And live, and live, and linger till I die.

THE APPROACH.

"Ut caput in magnis ubi non est tangere signis
Ponitur hic imos ante corona pedes."

PROP.

As one who strives with flowers to crown
  A Parian statue's marble height,
But fails with lifted hands to reach
  Its brow of glorious white,
And, failing, mourns that he should lose
  For his bright gifts acceptance meet,
And lays them, lowly, with a sigh
  Before the statue's feet;

So on the ground my love I lay
  Before thee, lady, with a sigh,
And let it rest unheeded there,—
  Ah me! it cannot die!

It rests, as flowers might rest;—but thou
  Remainest calm as thou hast been,
Nor stoopest from thy spirit's home
  Empyreal and serene.

LOVE BORN OF PITY.

BEFORE them rich in varied light,
  In dædal glory blythe and gay,
With mazy streamlets silver-bright
  The many-coloured champaign lay,
And near the blue horizon's bound
  With laughing waves the ocean shone,
Commingling soft his murmured sound
  With bird's and wind's melodious tone.

The fragrant breeze was lily-sweet,
  With manna-dews the grass was wet,
And deeply clustered round their feet
  The hyacinth and violet;

And that fair girl who held his arm
  Was rapture at the radiant scene,
The lighted landscape's living charm,
  The glowing verdure's golden green.

But nought to him was wood or stream,
  Ambrosial twilight's starry gloom,
Or fluting wind or sunny gleam,
  Or even's blush or floweret's bloom,
For round his heart in many a coil
  The lurking sorrows hissed and twined,
And withering lay with grief and toil
  The faded blossom of his mind.

But when he gazed upon her face
  And saw the pity mirrored there,
And marked her young and maiden grace,
  And tender beauty passing rare,
He sighed :—and yet a transient ray
  Played o'er his features pale and dim,
That she, so innocent and gay,
  That she should mourn,—and mourn for him!

THE BREAKING OF THE ICE.

Oh if a seraph glittered down
  With rainbow wings athwart the blue,
Whose fair curls flowered beneath a crown
  That paled the ruby's hue;

A seraph whose immortal youth
  Was worn like some undying rose,—
Whose eyes had read the eternal truth
  That yon bright heavens disclose;

My spirit,—which hath quaffed to-day
  Sweet hope's ambrosial wine,—
Would not exchange the seraph's love
  For the dim *chance* of thine.

LIFE AT ETHYL.

THE waters glance, and the green leaves dance
  On the sunny and pleasant shores,
And the crystal clear of the silver mere
  Is plashed by our sparkling oars;
And the ripple upheaves the lily leaves
  Where the prow of our boat hath been,
And the foxglove's bed hath a print of our tread
  In the midst of its golden green:—
    Never, oh never, my life's full river
      So happily glided on,
    For thy presence hath given the light of heaven,
      Where nothing before had shone.

From the starry flowers of our earthly bowers
  We gaze when the morn rides high,
At the flowers which star the gardens afar
  In the depth of the purple sky;
And the days are calm, and the nights are balm,
  And the crownèd hours are free,
But the brightest gem of their diadem
  Is the thought and the sight of thee:—
    Ever, oh ever, may life's full river
      As happily glide along,
    For sad is the sigh of a broken heart
      In lieu of a flowing song.

THE FAVOURED HOUR.

Oft is the glowing canvas flushed
  By wingèd boys of beauty rare,
Who crush the rich empurpled must,
  Kissed by the vineyard's fragrant air.

And every blue bunch clustering o'er,
  And each full grape must shed its blood
To lend fresh sweetness to the store
  That laugheth in the wine-fat's flood.

So I:—and all that I can dream,
  And all I do and all I say,
Are crushed by memory in the stream
  Of one rich hour of every day.

IN FEAR AND SORROW.

My nature is not sad,
  No weary heart have I;
A little makes me glad, lady,
  Yet you hear me sigh.

I am not prone to fears,
  Though dangers I have met;
Yet now the coward tears, lady,
  On my cheek are wet.

Ever and anon
  They glister in dim eyes;
Once a laughter shone, lady,
  Where the dim tears rise.

What shall be the end?
  Shall sorrow be my lot?
O, I have one Friend, lady;
  He forsakes me not!

I seek Him night and day,
  Stricken deep and sore;
And I ever pray, lady,
  Soon to trust Him more.

HOPE'S AUGURY.

When the rosy light is flowing
  From the golden urn of day,
When the pearly cloudlets, glowing
  O'er the sunlit sapphire stray,
When the fragrant wind is dreaming
  On the laughter-lighted sea,
And the green world blythely gleaming,—
  I will pray, and pray for thee!

When the twilight's purple billow
  Bursteth into starry spray,
Ere on slumber's silken pillow
  Grief and fear are smoothed away;

'Mid the wearying hours of sadness,
  'Mid the bounding hours of glee,
In my care as in my gladness,—
  I will pray, and pray for thee.

Pray for thee!—the fiery column
  Gliding o'er the crimson sand,
Leading on in glory solemn
  Towards the fair and promised land,
Burned not as a surer token
  Of the rest that was to be,
Than the love my heart hath spoken,
  And must ever feel for thee.

THE ANGEL HEADS.

THE first thing that my sad eyes see
  When morning sunbeams on them fall,
Is that fair wreath of cherub heads
  That shines upon the wall.

The same, love, that we gazed on once
  In London, when unknown to thee
Young Love first led into my heart
  His purple revelry.

It calls my waking thoughts to heaven,
  Yet ere I plead in worship there,
The beauty of a bright young face
  Comes in upon my prayer.

Aye! even in the trance of prayer
  With thoughts of thee my heart is stirred:—
Take, lady, take the life I give,
  And crown it with a word.

It is, it is the will of Heaven,
  Clearly I read the bright decree!
Take, lady, take the life I give,
  The heart I vow to thee!

THE PLIGHTED TROTH.

O LILIAN! never since the day
  I played a happy careless boy,
Has fancy painted to my heart
  So passionate a joy!

Thine own dear hand was clasped in mine,
  The jewels of thine eyes were closed,
And drooping on my shoulder, love,
  Thy queenly head reposed.

And o'er my fond enfolding arm,
  Thy fragrant golden tresses fell,
And our hearts murmured of a peace
  They could not syllable.

The green grass was our summer seat,
  The whispering firs our Eden-bower,
And our glad spirits laughed amid
  The sobbing of the shower.

O from this day for evermore
  Take, dearest, take the life I give;
In the high service of our God
  For thee alone I live.

Aye still the tears, love, wet my cheek,
  But now they flow for very bliss;
I knew not that the wide world held
  So pure a joy as this.

MIDNIGHT THOUGHTS.

THOU art sleeping, I am waking;
  Sweet my thoughts are as a rose;
Thoughts of thee my slumber breaking
  Stir within its deep repose,
As the heaven's white plumes descending,
  Stir the mere with purest snows,
As the tremulous starlight, blending
  With the darkness till it glows.

See the harvest moon is shining,
  Waves of silver round her swell;
Sweet is sleep;—yet thus reclining
  Sweeter 't is my thoughts to tell:—

Like the souls that pure and holy
  Live and love, and prosper well,
Leaning aye on myrrh and moly,
  Melilote and asphodel!

MAGIC CASEMENTS.

"Magic casements opening on the foam
Of perilous seas in faery land forlorn."
KEATS.

DARLING, let the casements open;—
Not on foam of faëry seas,
But on love, and faith, and beauty,
Sunlit homes and flowery leas;
Tell them soon, love; for I cannot
Long restrain my joy and pride,
Sitting ever cold and silent,
Cold and silent by thy side.

Now you know, love, my endeavours
  Reach a certain statue's height,
And I must with flowers be crowning
  Its pure brows of lily-white;
Must, love, must;—then gently tell them,
  Nothing fearing, nothing loth;
If their hearts are good and human
  They will love and bless us both.

A PASSING SHADOW.

O DEAREST, dearest, grant again
  The radiance of the hour that's flown,
  When angel-led your love to own
You crowned me gladdest-souled of men.

For oh! as if some hand had rent
  The very sun-god's robe of flame,
  E'en so those saddening murmurs came
Upon the joy thy presence lent.

Was it a vision, love?—it seemed
  So sweet to gaze upon thy face,
  That breathed a glory and a grace
More, more than all I could have dreamed.

And do I wake?—no, Lilian, no,
  Thy bright lips with one perfect kiss
  Shall give me back the perfect bliss,
Whose waning made me tremble so.

WORDS FAIL.

My heart, love, is a lyre,
  And over its silver strings
Love's melody runs, as if every wire
  Were touched by a fairy's wings.

They flash with a transient fire,
  And the soul for a moment sings;—
But ever the passionate notes expire
  In meaningless murmurings.

I love, and love, and love;
  For thee doth the life-flame burn:
No fonder song in the heavens above
  Could tell how the spirits yearn!

THE SLEEPING VOW.

Οὐκ ὄναρ ἀλλ' ὕπαρ.

At the midnight I was waking, now as oft of pure delight,
When a vision floated towards me in the watches of the night,
Floated towards my pillowed head, love ;—his divine pale golden hair
Flowered around me, softly flowing o'er his visage young and fair,
And his violet eyes starlitten, with a dewy love-light shined,
And he wore white valley-lilies in the golden locks entwined.

Gently by my head he rested, and his iridescent wings
Bathed me in the fragrant lustre of their silvery glimmerings,
And he leant above me thrilling all my senses with a charm,
Me in angel-arms enfolding, folded in my human arm;
And his voice was like the ripple of a river in its flow,
And there came sweet words upon it,—ah! how musically low!

"I am come the guardian angel of thy loved one,—whom I tend;
Thou hast won her, be it ever thine to shelter and defend,
Love and shield and help each other ever tenderly as now,
Swear to love and shield her ever:"—then he kissed me on the brow,

And my heart within me burning with its love-fires
heaved and fell,
And I swore a passionate oath, love, and I swear
to keep it well.

Half a dream and half a waking: but if it were
dream or not,
Never, never, shall my vision or its meaning be
forgot;
Never, oh, my darling, never! hear me swear by
life and love,
And the glad green earth beneath us, and the
bright blue heaven above;
Hear me swear it! so I sink, love, to a deep and
happy rest,
Such a sleep as might be envied in the regions of
the blest.

THE JOY OF LOVE.

BEFORE me hast thou placed,
By that dear love of thine,
A goblet richly chased, love,
And wreathed with eglantine.

Up to the jewelled brim
The merry bubbles shine,
And all the rubied rim, love,
Is sweet with anodyne.

Sometimes forebodings dim
And coward fears are mine,
To-night my senses swim, love,
In ecstasies divine.

Ah, quickly runs to waste
  Our life's allotted line;
Thine orange flowereth,—haste, love,
  The bridal wreath to twine.

UNDE FACES VENIUNT?

O THOU art lovelier than a swan that floats
Rose-dyed with sunset down a silver stream;—
Yet 'tis not for thy beauty that I love.

O thou art innocent as childhood is,
When childhood's tiny hand first draws the blue
Bright curtains of its antenatal heaven;—
Yet 'tis not for thine innocence I love.

O thou art gentle as the light of stars
That sleeps immirrored on a tropic sea,
With green shores sloping to its purple wave;—
Yet 'tis not for thy gentleness I love.

Then wherefore do I love? I cannot tell
More than the flower can, when its drooping leaves
Turn to the light, or more than can the pearl,
That in the rosy sundew sleeps at noon,
Why in the rosy moss it sleeps at noon:—
And yet I love thee with a perfect love,
And will do, Lilyblossom, to the end.

A MEMORY OF THE TROTH.

O THAT ambrosial day!
Though its hours have passed away
Like the shiver of a silver chord when melodies are o'er,
Yet I remember well
The tale it has to tell,
And shall do, dearest, when my foot is on heaven's starry floor.

We were lingering o'er the page
Of the great and gentle sage,
The loved child of immortals though a slave and poor and lame,—

When the spirit-fountains deep
Were broken by the sweep,
The lightning-sweep of Love's wild wing as down
from heaven he came.

And then the strange emotion
As of some awful ocean
That moans and heaves, it knows not why, beneath
the rising moon,
When others heard the tale
Of a heart that would prevail,
And we sank to dreamy silence in love's delicious
swoon.

And oh, the greenwood shade,
When your noble head was laid,
My own, my own loved Lilian, upon my trembling
arm,
And spite of saddening showers
With sunshine and with flowers
Our hearts were bright and redolent by young Love's
faery charm.

And at even's airy bloom
In your own dear little room
We rested, and you listened to the poet's golden song;
Dear May was by the side
Of the lover and his bride;—
O for one day most happily the glad hours flowed along!

At last the twilight sweet,
As she passed with silent feet,
Shook out the stars, like dewdrops in the gardens of the sky;
And I dreamed the livelong night,
In slumbers rosy-light,
That a thousand thousand angel-forms with blessings floated by.

PERFECT PEACE.

A SILVER evening clear and chill;
  The lucent moon is bright above,
And all my thoughts are pure and still,
    And breathe of love.

Without,—the wind, sweet lyrist, plays
  And golden leaves unmurmuring fall,
As Autumn drops on trodden ways
    Her coronal.

Within,—the warm, the softened glow
  Of fire and lamplight cheer the room,
And crimson shadows ebb and flow
    Amid the gloom.

Alone beside my hearth I sit,
  And quaff unblamed the cup of good,
And in my arm-chair feel the fit
    Of idlest mood.

A thousand blessings o'er me bend,
  Like Eden-doves of softest plume;—
Ne'er did Life's hues more richly blend,
    More richly bloom.

I thank Thee, Father! Ah, I know
  The starry lights must fade away;
But I will thank Thee ere they go,
    And bless to-day.

And now, oh, Father! ere I rest
  In holy calms of dewy sleep,
I pray, while I am nobly blest,
    For those that weep.

Thou know'st them, Father! Thou art just;
  No tear wets sorrow's cheek unseen;
And Thou wilt save Thy world; we trust
    Thy love serene.

Bless Thou my dear ones; young and old,
  Whate'er on earth their lot may be,
Thy sons with wings of love enfold
    Eternally.

And oh! with all Thy blessings dower
  The dearest, dearest, whom I love;
On her thy rarest mercies shower
    From heaven above.

On her Thy choicest mercies shower
  From heaven above, and earth beneath,
And twine of each undying flower
    Her bridal wreath.

From golden morn to dewy eve,
  From golden eve to dewy morn,
May angel-hands her roses weave
    Without a thorn!

O hasten, hasten Thou the time,
  When . . . . hark! upon the rich breeze swells,
Heard in the future, that sweet chime
    Of bridal bells!

O hasten Thou the wisht-for days!
  Unsevered then by change or chance,
How nobly will we tread the ways
    Of circumstance.

Most bravely!—till in raptured dream
  Unto our dying souls be given
To hear the harps and catch the gleam
    From gates of heaven!

THE LIGHT OF HOME.

When wintry nights are glooming,
  And wintry winds are high,
And white with snow the ground below,
  And black the cloudy sky;
O far beyond the waters
  The fickle feet may roam,
But they find no light so pure and bright
  As the one fair star of home;
The star of tender hearts, lady,
  That glows in an English home.

Dear lady, thou hast kindled
  That light for many a day,

Hast watched the joy without alloy
  Of childhood's holiday:
O once again enkindle
  Its beacon 'mid the foam,
Amid the strife of worldly life
  Relume the fires of home,—
The softest, purest fires, lady,
  That shine in an English home.

Two hearts have blessed you, lady,
  Two fond hearts bless you still,
And they will pray through night and day
  To shield your life from ill;
Of all hopes this the fondest
  Beneath the blue sky's dome,
That you may prove how deep their love
  In a happy English home,
Where younger faces shine, lady,
  In another English home.

WITH A JEWELLED CROSS.

A TINY flowery-graven cross
  With brilliants and with rubies set,
Is here, love, with its fragile chain
  A twinkling carcanet;
And were each twinèd link afire
  With starry confluence of gems,
A tremulous lustre, such as flames
  In diamond diadems;
If Ind and Afric brought their store
  Of gold and pearl and emerald bright,
It yet were all too poor to clasp
  Thy neck's rosed lily-white.

Yet take it, love;—thou dost not need
  A borrowed gleam to make thee fair,
No flowers around thy royal brow,
  No gems amid thine hair;
Far less a little gift like this,
  Whose only glory will be lent
From radiance of the sun that lights
  Thy beauty's firmament;
Yet take it, love, and wear it long,
  And let it long the symbol be
Of trials, turned by love to gold,
  And borne triumphantly.

O happy little graven cross,
  O happy little golden chain,
To rest upon her snowy breast
  And round her neck remain;
A-tremble on the noble heart
  That heaves beneath her silken dress,
A-tremble in the light that loves
  To linger o'er her loveliness;

O happy cross!—but happier far
  Shouldst thou the sacred symbol be,
To loving hearts that understand
  Thy sparkling heraldry.

IMPATIENCE OF HOPE.

Fly on, fly swift, ye weary days,
  Swift, swift as startled dove,
I cannot brook the long delays
  That keep me from my love;
Fly on, fly swift, ye weary hours
  That stay me from her side,
And scatter all the path with flowers
  That leads me to my bride;
Yet all your speed will tardy seem
  And weary, till once more
My day's fair hope, my night's sweet dream,
  My loved one ye restore.

"O wait," they said, "the snow must fall,
  The mere be thick with ice,
And winter crest his coronal
  With silvery-leaved device;
Our young white hands must tinge with dews
  The cradled flowers of spring,
And plume the blossom-burning hues
  Of summer's purple wing;
Sweet lives are given us to protect
  Of bird and bloomy bell,
Yet will we not thy 'hest neglect,
  All, all shall yet be well!"

IV.

POEMS OF DEATH.

A DEAD CHILD.

τὸ δ' ἐπεὶ φανῇ
βῆναι κεῖθεν ὅθεν περ ἥκει
πολὺ δεύτερον ὡς τάχιστα.
SOPH. O. C. 1225.

SEE where the infant lies,—
The rose-tint passed from the tender brow,
And the light from the liquid eyes;—
Where, oh where is he now?

He hath lived but a few short hours;—
O ere his birth on the yester eve
To this sad strange world of ours,
Where had his spirit been?

And at the trumpet-sound
Startling the dead from the rolling sea
And the depths of the wormy ground,
Where, oh where shall he be?

Nought can we know or tell;
All things end in a mystery;
Yet may we answer well
That with the Love and the Majesty
Calm in the depths of Eternity,
There, oh there shall he be!

AT MUNICH.

ENGARLANDED by fondest hands
  The infant bodies lay,
Each with the smile his face had worn
  The hour he passed away;
O well those lily wreaths beseem
  The fair and fragile clay,—
Round the dead flowers the living flowers
  Less beautiful than they.

And Age was there, and manly forms
  That passed in youth away,
Each with the look his face shall wear
  Upon the judgment day;

But when upon those sealèd eyes
  Is flashed the awakening ray,
Shall joy or woe that waking be?—
  Oh Father, who shall say?

And by the dead the living now
  Are gazing hand in hand,
As on the sacred river's brink
  Which bounds the farther Land;
Aye it is well by such a scene
  In silent awe to stand;
O God, may quick and dead be joined,
  A blest immortal band.

And, as we gaze, an awful calm
  Steals o'er the troubled mind,
To mark with what a trustful smile
  They leave the world behind;
A calm of deep, of wordless love,
  Yet not to danger blind;
O God! oh Father! may that love
  To Thee our spirits bind!

HEGESIAS.

I WOULD that I were dead,
Dead and forgotten in the silent grave;
Where o'er the dreamless head
The violets blossom, and the cedars wave,
And not a wind should rave
O'er the still home where peace hath triumphèd;
But the nerved heart could brave
The fiery darts with which it erst hath bled,
And the fierce dents of passion's iron glaive
Ah! were all silent in the silent grave,
Forgotten in the dim forgotten grave,
And I among the dead!

For life hath lost the joys that once it gave,
  And all its mirth has fled,
And sunk to silence hath the fountain-wave
  That aye so silver-sweetly murmurèd;
  And tears the pale cheek lave
Where boyhood's vernal rose its blossom shed,
  In floral tenderness of dewy red:—
Ah were all silent in the silent grave,
  And I among the dead!

EPILOGUE.

Forgive, oh God, forgive
The fretful passion and the peevish cries;
Oh teach me how to live,
And with the patience of a cheery heart
Bear up and take my part
In the full choir of earthly melodies.
Forgive, oh God, forgive
The thankless heart; oh! teach me how to live!

ABIIT AD PLURES.

CALM are the holy dead
When the passion of Life is o'er,
When the green turf flowers o'er the resting head,
And the turbulent dreams of the world have fled,
And the wild heart throbs no more!

Blessed are the holy dead,
Though dark were their lot before;
For healed are the wounds that on earth have bled,
And dried are the tears that on earth were shed
For the sorrows that er they bore!

Wise are the holy dead,
Aye! wise with a noble lore;
For to their clear glances are open spread
The scrolls where the secrets of God are read,
In the heavens where the angels soar!

Oh who will bemoan the dead,
As stricken with anguish sore?
Though the sod or the marble be o'er his head
His beautiful soul with a song hath fled
To the rest that it loved of yore!

DYING.

"Animula, vagula, blandula
Hospes comesque corporis,
Quæ nunc abibis in loca
Pallidula, rigida, nudula,
Nec ut soles dabis jocos."

HADRIAN.

TENDER, airiest spirit,
Naked, fair, alone,
Fine as softest melody's
Sweetest undertone,
Tell me, dost thou shiver
At the purpling wave
Of the misty river?—
Good my soul, be brave!

Starry glimpses often
Doth that mist unfold,
Oft its splendorous edges
Burn with rose and gold;

Oft their sparkling tiars
  Angels o'er it wave,
Gemmed with rainbow fires :—
  Good my soul, be brave !

Thousands true it scorcheth,
  Flaming naphthaline ;
Thousands more it healeth,
  Balmed with anodyne ;
And the noblest ever
  Love their limbs to lave
In that glooming river :—
  Good my soul, be brave !

Life, and Truth, and Wisdom
  Dwell o'er yonder tide,
And a tranquil stillness
  To *our* world denied ;
And each holy spirit
  Whom our God doth save,
There bright homes doth herit :—
  Good my soul, be brave !

V.

END OF THE HISTORY.

THE JEWEL FOUND.

"A pearl not of the Indian but the empyrean ocean."
SIR THOS. BROWNE.

PURE, happy Peace! on this sad earth
  We sought thee long in vain,
And in thy place were pale Despair,
  Horror, and Woe, and Pain;
And the winds and the clouds and the mountains
    sighed
  That thou wert not in them,
For thou art not a pearl of the stained earth,
  But an Empyréan gem!

In Nature first we sought thee,
  'Mid voices soft and low,
That murmur in the forest dells
  And o'er the blue waves flow;

We gazed on the sunset and the wood,
  The rainbow and the rose;
But they could not bring to the sick heart health,
  Or the weary soul repose.

Then Power and Pride we ransacked,
  And bade our houses burn
With golden lamps and splendorous hues,
  Gemmed vase and tinted urn,
And diamonds from the mountain-heart,
  And corals from the deep:—
Sudden, amid the gorgeous pomp,
  We sate us down to weep!

Then searched we long in Pleasure;
  But 'mid the dizzy round
Of the revelling crowd and the mazy dance
  We heard a moaning sound;
And discords in the harp-notes rang,
  And flowers grew dim and pale,
And shrieks of mocking laughter told
  How that wild hope would fail!

Then madly did we turn to Sin,—
  But when she seemed most fair,
The Siren mask slipped off, and left
  The Fury-features bare;
Her burning cup of blood-red wine
  She waves before us still,—
"Ye shall drink the ragged and bitter dregs,
  Aye, drink them to the fill."

Last, last, with God we sought thee,
  And found a healing balm,
And joy and light and hope and life,
  Sweet rest and holy calm;
And lying on the farther shore
  Thy perfect pearl shall be,
Where glory from the Golden Throne
  Gleams o'er the glassy sea!

AFTER ALL.

'T WAS a happy winter evening,
  And the leaves and berries bright
Wreathed around the walls and pictures
  Glimmered in the glimmering light;
In the twilight I was thinking,
  And my darling sitting by,
With her smile of holy beauty
  And her dark and gentle eye.

Thinking ever, gazing on her
  In the firelight-reddened gloom,
While a loving, prayerful silence
  Brooded o'er the little room,

And it seemed as though the angels
  Lingered there with her and me,
Shining on us, holy, silent,
  Silent, as we love to be.

Many a hearth that night was lightened
  With the charm of faces fair,
Flowers and lights and scenes of laughter,
  Jewelled brows and golden hair,
And they wreathed the dance of pleasure,
  And they sang the songs of glee,—
But *we* sate there, angel-haunted,
  Silent, as we love to be.

Till at last the silence breaking
  With a sweet and silver tone,
(Ah! her voice—the music in it,
  As we sit and muse alone!)
Spake she in the hallowed stillness,
  She my own, my gentle wife:—
"Tell me, Louis, of your boyhood,
  And the story of your life."

And I sat and gazed upon her,
  And my tears fell free and fast,
Thinking o'er the happy present,
  Weeping for the weary past;
Thrice I strove the tale to utter,
  Till I saw it might not be,—
For I felt that holy angels
  Lingered there with her and me.

Then I said:—"The pain, the dimness,
  Lilian, they are over now,
Though you yet may read the struggle
  On my worn and wearied brow;
Nay thou may'st not know the story,
  And I may not tell thee more;—
Years the cankerworm hath eaten,
  Who their memory shall restore?"

* * * * * *

So I said, and sank to silence;
  And the firelight flickered on,
And the leaves and berries glimmered
  Where the glancing radiance shone;

And the angels hovered o'er us,
  Musing there with her and me,
As we sat there happy, silent,
  Silent, as we love to be!

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